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Elimination of unilateral extraterritorial coercive economic measures as a means of political and economic compulsion

Information and communication technologies for development

Questions relating to information

Macroeconomic policy questions: science and technology for development

Environment and sustainable development

Operational activities for development

Implementation of the first United Nations Decade for the Eradication of Poverty (1997-2006)

Letter dated 5 November 2002 from the Permanent Representative of Venezuela to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to transmit herewith the Dubai Declaration for the Promotion of Science and Technology in the South (see annex), adopted by the South-South High-level Conference on Science and Technology of the Group of 77, held in Dubai, United Arab Emirates, from 27 to 30 October 2002.

On behalf of the Group of 77, I would greatly appreciate it if you could arrange for the present letter and its annex to be circulated as a document of the fifty-seventh session of the General Assembly, under agenda items 31, 32, 79, 84 (c), 87, 88 and 89.

(*Signed*) Milos **Alcalay**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative of Venezuela to the United Nations
Chairman of the Group of 77

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Annex to the letter dated 5 November 2002 from the Permanent Representative of Venezuela to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

Dubai Declaration for the Promotion of Science and Technology in the South

We, the Participants at the Group of 77 South-South High-Level Conference on Science and Technology,

Pursuant to the decision of the Havana Programme of Action adopted by the first South Summit of the Group of 77, held in Havana, Cuba, from 10-14 April 2000,

Deeply concerned that the prevailing and growing knowledge gap between the North and the South contributes to the marginalization of many developing countries and the significant segment of humankind already afflicted by poverty,

Aware that the disparity between the developed and developing countries, in their respective capacities and implementation, has emerged as a major problem,

Affirm and seek to strengthen the role of the United Nations in mainstreaming the positive benefits of science and technology for the developing countries,

Committed to work towards the promotion of the development of science and technology by increasing the allocation of resources to that end, developing appropriate institutional frameworks and promoting technology through advanced and quality education,

Having assembled at a High-level Conference on Science and Technology of the Group of 77 in Dubai, United Arab Emirates, from 27-30 October 2002, to formulate a new vision and a global strategy for the promotion of science and technology in the South,

Hereby, adopt the Dubai Declaration as a practical platform for the promotion of science and technology among the Member States of the Group of 77:

1. We reaffirm our commitment to the implementation of the specific actions at the national and international levels contained in the Havana Programme of Action. These include, *inter alia*, the promotion and development of knowledge and technology in the South; to encourage the institutions of the South to launch further initiatives to promote knowledge and technology in developing countries; to harness the potential of human resources, including expatriates, from the South for the benefit of developing countries; to address the challenges associated with brain drain; to create an enduring international environment to ensure the South's access to knowledge and technology; and to promote the central role of the United Nations in removing different barriers faced by the South in the acquisition of knowledge and technology;

2. We emphasize with deep concern the disparities between the developed and developing world in their capacity to produce scientific and technological knowledge in support of social and economic development. In this context, we welcome the initiative of the United Arab Emirates in UNESCO to launch a South–South Solidarity Programme in the Field of Education, aimed at assisting developing countries to use and benefit from the South's potential in the field of education; reduce illiteracy; and improve education for all. We call upon Member States of the Group of 77 , other countries and agencies to formulate a strategy to ensure that sufficient resources are available in developing countries for science education at secondary and tertiary levels;

3. We express our profound concern at the persistence and prevalence of the scourge of poverty on a global scale and also at the inadequate, intangible results of existing poverty alleviation and eradication strategies. Cognizant of the pernicious impact of poverty on scientific and technological progress and social and economic development of nations, particularly in developing societies, we call for the abolition of poverty as a strategic objective and priority of governments and scientific communities;

4. We consider that more attention and new and additional resources should be devoted by the international community to developing countries' concerns, and uses of scientific knowledge appropriate to, and to the direct benefit of, the developing world. The Conference calls for greater recognition of the special needs of developing countries in science and technology. The Conference advocates greater understanding, consideration and cooperation among Member States and other countries for the different needs and priorities of developing countries in respect of new technologies;

5. We call for further attention and resources to be devoted to traditional knowledge, its promotion, enrichment, advancement and mechanisms for its protection, and the sharing of benefits arising from its use;

6. We recognize the significant obstacles to science and technology in developing countries, including, *inter alia*, lack or inadequacy of resources, infrastructure and institutions, gender imbalance in Science and Technology, lack of trained personnel, prohibitive costs of acquiring knowledge and technology, and barriers to the transfer of knowledge, personnel and technologies from developed to developing countries. The Conference calls for tangible steps to address these obstacles and facilitate the transfer of resources to enhance domestic capacity building in developing economies;

7. Recalling paragraphs 42, 43 and 44 of the Declaration adopted by the Twenty-sixth Annual Meeting of Ministers for Foreign Affairs of the Group of 77, held in New York on 19 September 2002, we firmly reject the imposition of laws and regulations with extraterritorial impact and all other forms of coercive economic measures, including unilateral sanctions against developing countries that affect scientific and technological programmes, for peaceful purposes, of the Member States of the Group of 77;

8. We acknowledge the significant role that the institutional members of the Trieste-based system have played in the promotion of science and technology capacity building in the developing world and in the advancement of South-South cooperation through the fostering of scientific networks. In this context, we call upon the Member States of the Group of 77 to consider supporting such programmes in the future;

9. We emphasize the importance and support the role of UNCTAD and the United Nations Commission on Science and Technology for Development in promoting science and technology transfer and development in developing countries;

10. We acknowledge that access to clean water and proper sanitation is central to health and quality of life and is a prime responsibility of the public sector. Science and technology can play a key role in access, management and sustainable use of water. All necessary actions, using science-based and effective technological solutions, should be taken to support national, regional and international programmes to provide clean water and improved sanitation to communities and households including:

    a) Improvements in water treatment, reticulation, use and re-use, taking into account, where applicable, traditional methods and knowledge;

    b) Integrated water resource management approaches for sustainable use, including the protection of groundwater resources, including minimising impacts of fertilizer use, industrial pollution;

    c) Novel methods of harvesting, storing and recycling, including innovation to reduce costs of desalination;

    d) Effective sanitation processes; and

    e) Effective use of primary, secondary and tertiary education on water and sanitation.

11. We recognize the importance and tremendous potential that biotechnology and related industries offer for poverty eradication, technological progress, industrial development and health improvement. We call on Member States of the Group of 77 to invest resources into the development of the vast genetic resources in their countries. Traditional and indigenous use of these resources should also be documented and research activities carried out to upgrade them. Members are called upon to note and respond to public and ethical concerns in the application of some aspects of biotechnology, and therefore, public awareness, regulations and legislation on bio-safety are of great importance;

12. We call for the identification, documentation and networking of institutions and individuals who have made significant progress in the field of biotechnology, particularly in medical, agricultural, forestry, animal, fisheries, marine and environmental biotechnology. Funding institutions such as

development banks should support these institutions with funds for research, collaborative programs and networking. International institutions such as FAO, UNCTAD, UNDP, UNESCO and others are called upon to increase their support to biotechnology programs in the Member States of the Group of 77;

13. We recognize that Information and Communication Technology (ICT) has the potential to transform economic and social conditions and accelerate the alleviation of poverty and that concerted efforts are necessary to narrow the digital divide, within and between nations, actions at all levels are required to:

    a) Establish suitable standards and frameworks to support developing countries;

    b) Accelerate the provision of core ICT infrastructure, increased access and reduced costs nationally and regionally;

    c) Increase connectivity and physical access to ICT infrastructure, including the development and use of low cost hardware devices and software, especially open source;

    d) Accelerate and intensify the provision of content and services for the public good, including e-government, health, education, agriculture, science and technology, culture and the arts;

    e) Strengthen and enlarge programmes in developing countries for human resources, skills and knowledge in ICT;

    f) Work towards a harmonized G-77 position for and active engagement in the World Summit on Information Society; which will be held in two phases: in Geneva in 2003 and in Tunis in 2005;

    g) International institutions such as ITU, UNDP, and others are called upon to increase their support to ICT programs in the Member States of the Group of 77.

14. We reaffirm our full and unwavering support and commitment to scientific and technological cooperation among developing countries under the Havana Programme of Action and reiterate our commitment to the spirit of South-South cooperation among the Member States of the Group of 77. Some countries in the South have developed significant expertise in biotechnology, information technology, and water and sanitation technologies. We therefore call for the exchange of scientific experiences and of technologies with a view to intensifying cooperation and delivering real benefits among developing countries, using new and existing mechanisms to the full;

15. We call upon the Member States of the Group of 77 members of WTO to work towards the recognition that the intellectual property system should respond to the development needs of the developing countries and become more supportive of their science and technological objectives;

16. We also call for the establishment of a South-South network, linking research & development (R&D) institutions and other centers of excellence to enhance the South's efforts in setting up strategic programmes of R&D, particularly for the development of vaccines, drugs and diagnostics for the prevention and cure of major communicable diseases in the South, such as malaria, tuberculosis and HIV/AIDS;

17. We invite the Chairman of the Group of 77 in New York, in collaboration with the Chairmen of the Chapters of the Group of 77, as required, to initiate or undertake consultations for the implementation of the following decisions of the South Summit, and to report on the results of his consultations to the forthcoming Annual Meeting of the Ministers for Foreign Affairs of the Group of 77 in September 2003:

    a) Establishment of a Trust Fund for the promotion of knowledge and technology in the South. To this end, governments, the private sector, foundations and other organizations are encouraged to provide seed money for the Fund;

    b) Establishment of a consortium of knowledge and technology, comprising representatives from the governments, the private sector and other relevant organizations, which should meet on a regular basis in order to promote joint ventures in the South in the field of science and technology; and

    c) Establishment of the Award of the Group of 77 for Science and Technology, in order to recognize and honor individual scientists from developing countries who have made outstanding scientific contributions of the highest international quality.

18. We call for an effective implementation of this Declaration and invite the Chairman of the Group of 77 in New York and the concerned Chapters to put in place the necessary practical modalities for the follow-up of the Dubai Conference outcome in close coordination with the relevant United Nations bodies and agencies, and through:

    a) Setting up of three virtual working groups on ICT, biotechnology and clean water, with a view to implementing the provisions of the Declaration; and

    b) Development of an Internet-based communication mechanism among G-77 resource persons and institutions to reduce costs and to enhance the work of the Group of 77.

19. We call for high-level meetings of the Group of 77 on science and technology, modeled on the Dubai Conference, to be held on a regular basis in order to give consideration to emerging issues and to receive reports of the working groups referred to above.